

To: ~~qualifications~~ from Dad.

Indian Residential School Commission
of the
Missionary Society of the Church of
England in Canada

(38-42 The Bible House, 184 Alexander Ave., Winnipeg, Man.)



ELKHORN INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL
(Diocese of Brandon)
ELKHORN - MANITOBA



School Crest



Rev. Canon S. J. Wickens, B.A., B.D.
(Principal)

WHERE IS IT?

The Elkhorn Indian Residential School is located on the main line of the C.P.R. It is about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the village of Elkhorn and 187 miles west of Winnipeg.

The School property, which belongs to the Dominion Government, consists of the main building, three residences, barns, implement sheds, granaries and other outbuildings that go to make up a well-equipped school and farm.

In addition there are 320 acres of arable land. The quarter section on which the buildings stand includes a large vegetable garden and pasture for cattle and horses.

The School rents a further 480 acres of land adjoining the Federal property and most of this is under cultivation.

WHAT IS ITS HISTORY?

The history of the Elkhorn Indian School has three distinct chapters.

The first chapter started in 1885 when the Rev. E. F. Wilson, founder and principal of the Indian Home at Sault Ste. Marie, took a journey through the North West and was impressed with the needs for a school similar to the one he had already established.

On his return to Ontario he endeavored to raise funds to bring such benefits to the Indians of the plains.

Unsuccessful at first, he resolved to make a last effort. He issued a pamphlet setting forth the need and stating that if anyone would give \$1,000.00 to make a beginning he would go forward in faith and leave the rest with God.

This pamphlet fell into the hands of Mr. Rowswell of Elkhorn, who offered the \$1,000.00 required. This gift was supplemented by others and the Dominion Government then came forward with a grant.

The new home was opened on June 10th, 1888, with four pupils and one teacher. These four children stood the new and unusual life for twelve days and then all ran away together!

Others arrived, however, and on August 6th, 1889, the home was formally opened by Archibishop MacRory and given its name, "Washakada Indian Home," out of compliment to Mr. Rowswell, whose Indian name was "Washakada," meaning "all that is good."

In 1892, Mr. A. E. Wilson, son of the founder, was appointed and the success of the school was assured.

The School was at this time situated in the village itself and pupils came to it from reserves as far distant as the Blackfoot and Blood. Many came from pagan homes and accepted Christian baptism while

under tuition. Bootmaking, printing, tailoring, carpentering, tinsmithing and harness making were taught by trade instructors. Some of these instructors were resident at the School and others were local tradesmen who accepted Indian boys as apprentices.

In 1895 a destructive fire consumed most of the buildings. Within three days, however, the work was resumed in other rented premises in the village.

The second chapter opened when the Government decided to erect a new and substantial pile of buildings on the present site, which would make more extensive farming operations possible.

1897 saw the new plant occupied and under the efficient work of Mr. Wilson, who gave his best years to the Indians, the School held a leading place among the institutions of its kind.

In 1918, the Federal Department made a change of policy, which, unfortunately, resulted in the closing of the Elkhorn Indian Home after three decades of splendid service.

The third chapter started in 1923, when it was decided to make extensive alterations and additions to the School which had been vacant and neglected.

The Rev. F. Eley acted as Principal during the difficult period of reconstruction and in January, 1923, the first new pupils were admitted. The School was reopened under the administration of the Indian Residential School Commission of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada.

Mr. Eley, who gave ten years of constant service, won for the School a reputation for efficiency and discipline.

The present Principal was appointed in August, 1933.

WHERE DO THE CHILDREN COME FROM?

The Elkhorn School is unique in that although a school for Indians it is not located near to any Indian reserves.

The nearest Reserve is at Griswold, over fifty miles away, whence come the Sioux Indians—a non-treaty band—originally refugees from the United States, seeking sanctuary in Canada.

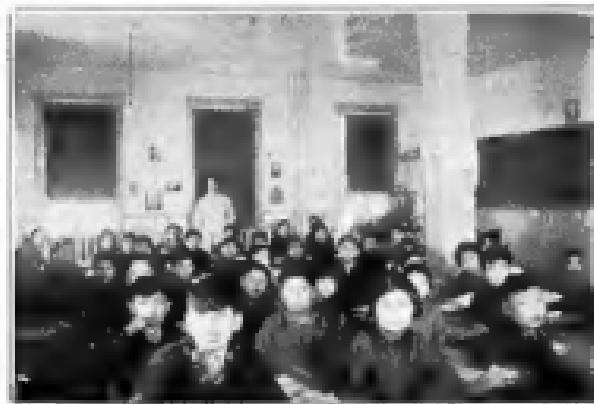
In addition to the Sioux there are Crees, Ojibway and Saulteaux children coming from Fairford, Lake St. Martin, Little Saskatchewan, Seantebury, Peguis, Fort Alexander and the many reserves north of The Pas, reaching up to York Factory and Port Nelson on the Hudson Bay, 1,000 miles away.

January 1st, 1935, saw 156 pupils in residence, ranging in ages from four years to seventeen years, and coming from about sixteen different reserves.

WHAT ARE THEY TAUGHT?

In the schoolrooms the curriculum of the Provincial Department of Education is followed and the Provincial Inspector makes regular visits, as in the White schools.

There are at present two classrooms and the children attend school on one half day each day. The Grades go up to and include Grade VII. One girl is doing her Grade XI. at the High School in town.



The Junior Class Room

The many bench trades taught in Mr. Wilson's time, forty years ago, are no longer on the curriculum, but more emphasis is put on farming, gardening and kindred occupations.



Sawing Wood

During the half day out of classrooms the boys work on the School farm under the direction of the Farm Instructor. While the senior boys handle the farm, others work in the garden or care for the herd of 35 Holstein cattle and attend to the horse barns, piggery, etc. Rough carpentering, engineering, painting and incidental work is done as occasion demands.



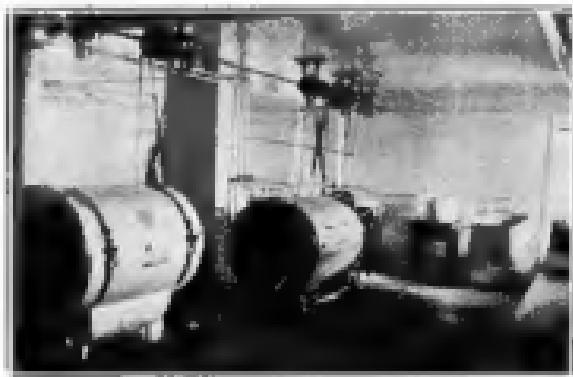
The School Barns

In addition, the boys milk the cows, assist in the Dairy and Laundry. They wash dishes, lay tables, make beds, scrub and sweep.



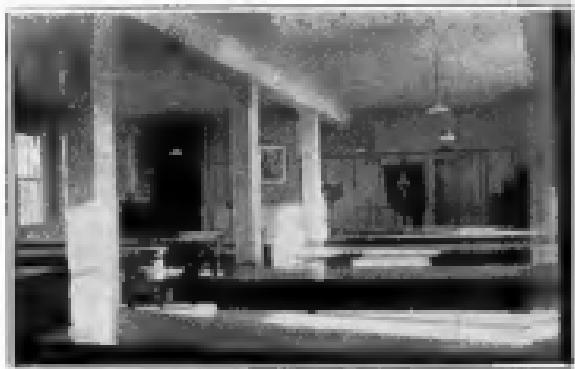
Milk Boys

The girls put 2,000 garments through the Laundry every week, about one half of these being repaired in the Sewing Room under the direction of the Sempstress.

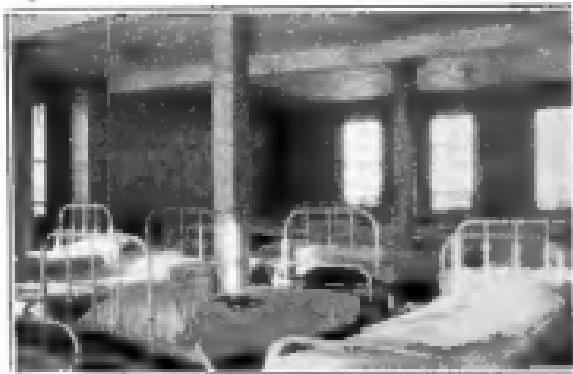


The Laundry

Butter making is taught in the Dairy and more than 700 loaves are baked every week in the School Bakery.

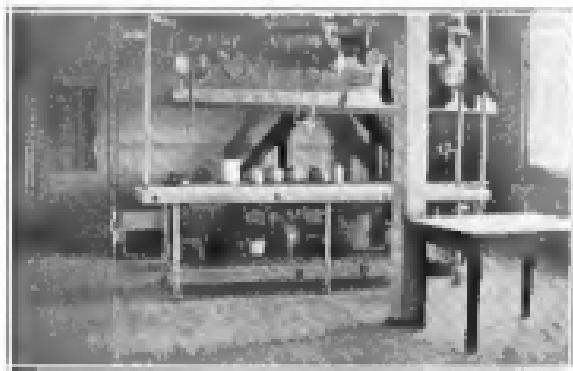


The Dining Room



Girls' Dormitory

General cooking is done in the main kitchen and the girls perform other necessary duties of housekeeping in various parts of the building.



The Kitchen

The success of the children in the classroom and practical arts is illustrated by the fact that at the Regina, Brandon and Elkhorn Fairs in 1934, the results achieved were as follows:

- Sewing—54 entries: 34 prizes.
- Cooking—5 entries: 2 prizes.
- School Work—36 entries: 16 prizes.

A School Council, consisting of six senior pupils, assists the Principal in some of the tasks of School government. This Council consists

of two captains and four councillors elected from the boys' and girls' sides of the school. These chosen leaders exercise a limited measure of authority and so are trained in initiative.

Thus, the School objective is not merely a schoolroom education but a many sided development, which will enable the graduates to take their places in life as industrious and efficient members of society, able to do many practical things reasonably well.

WHAT ARE THEIR RELAXATIONS?

The School lantern gives entertainment and occasionally a movie picture show is provided. The usual social evenings and a "visiting" night once a week gives opportunity for boy-girl contacts under proper supervision. A club night in cold weather and a radio, presented by an ex-member of the staff, fills in a pleasant evening.

The girls have a branch of the Woman's Auxiliary and some belong to a Glee Club.

In Winter, there are two skating rinks—one for the boys and another for the girls. Hockey teams play with the White boys in the village and the Indian boys have gained an excellent name for good sportsmanship.



Senior Hockey Team

In Summer, football is played and baseball is played by both boys and girls. Basketball is provided for the girls.

The School has a cadet corps and a gymnastic team.



Gymnastic Team

The girls have drill and hikes in the summer and all children unable to go home for their holidays have a happy time at picnics and other such treats.

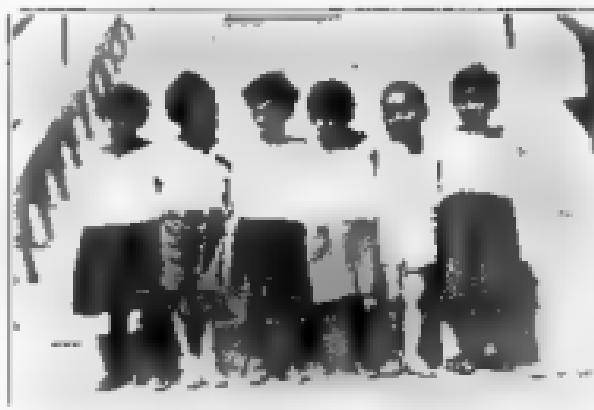


Girls at Drill

WHAT IS DONE FOR THEIR HEALTH?

A resident nurse with a well-equipped dispensary cares for the sick, while the School doctor lives only a few hundred yards away.

A daily treatment is given for Trachoma. Frequent doses of cod liver oil and Parrish's food help those who need it. A carefully balanced diet in the canteen room is provided and a monthly weighing of every child tells its story of progress. So little is the larger room of the School hospital used that it has been turned into a dormitory for the babies.



The babies

WHAT IS DONE FOR THEIR RELIGIOUS LIFE?

As the School crest indicates, Religion is at the heart of all that is done.

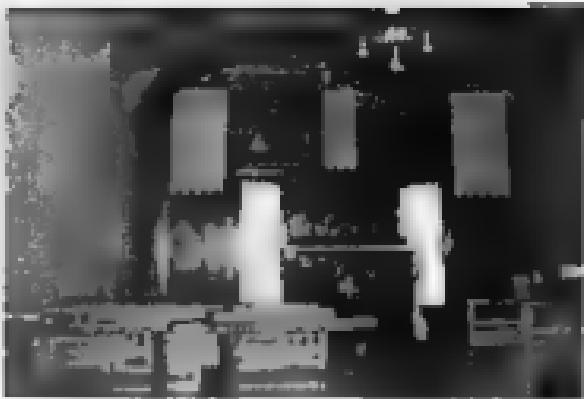
Religion is the key stone of the bridge between the old life and the new.

No matter how well-formed and laid the stones of health, farm and classroom training may be, the passage of the pupil from admission to graduation cannot be safely accomplished unless the key stone of the bridge is well and truly laid.

So Religion is at the centre of all the work. Christ is in the kitchen and at the plough as He is in the Chapel.

Every day is The Lord's Day. Rising bedside prayers, dining room prayers at breakfast and supper grace before and after meals, retiring bedside prayers—all these emphasize the place of prayer in the daily Christian life.

Every Sunday morning at 7.15, and on Saints' Days there is Holy Communion in the School Chapel. These are voluntary services and always well-attended.



The School Chapel

There is a daily Bible reading and religious instruction in every room in the classrooms. Sunday School lessons are taught by the staff and in 1934 thirty two children received certificates for success in the examinations set by the General Board of Religious Education.



Confirmation Class, 1934

The Sunday services inculcate the habit of public worship and the closing minutes of the graduating pupils' life in the School are spent at the Altar as the Pupil Prays a blessing.

Then the graduate goes out to battle against the tides of the Devil, so often seeking his or her undivided love on the Reserve.



Senior Boys



Senior Girls



Intermediate Boys



Junior Boys



Junior Girls

WHAT OF THE GRADUATES' FUTURE?

How the graduate meets the future depends largely on how he has been prepared during the years at Residential School. How he measures up to the strange contrast of Reserve life depends on how deeply the Christ life has been seen and lived while at School.

Too often going back to the Reserve means "going back" in more ways than one. Will the reader pray for the graduate pupils?

Character is made by the impact of personality upon personality. In the Residential School character must be made by the impact of the White man's character upon that of the Indian.

Dear Reader! Will you pray that the workers in our Residential Schools may live so near the Great Personality that our Indians may find Him Whom to know is Life Eternal?

THE SCHOOL PRAYER

O Almighty God, grant Thy blessing, we beseech Thee, to the Elk-horn Residential School and its activities; bless the Missionary Society and its endeavour; the Missionaries and all Christian Workers; the pupils and their witness; prosper with Thy favour all our undertakings, especially our efforts to make this institution a light to all Thy children. Forgive our failures, kindle our love and unite us closely in the service of Thy Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

